2023 AGM – QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY ATTENDEES

Where can the AGM minutes be found?
Minutes from past PEO AGMs can be found on the PEO website. The minutes from the 2023 AGM are available here: 2024 AGM | Professional Engineers Ontario (peo.on.ca)

What are PEO's major sources of revenue and expenses?
Please refer to the audited financial statements which can be found in the 2022 Annual Report.

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The audited financial statements can be found on PEO's website in the 2022 Annual Report.

Is the bidding process to select an auditor conducted on an annual basis?
A Request for Proposal (RFP) is issued every 5 years. The most recent RFP for audit services was issued in 2021.

What is the present term of present auditors?
The term of the auditor is 5 years - from 2022 to 2026 (both years inclusive), with the appointment to be confirmed each year by Council.

Was the appointed Auditor accepted via low bid process? Do we have access to the comparison report which PEO has done on this topic?
The incumbent was selected after a comprehensive and fair tendering process, with consideration to several factors including quality and value to PEO. The vendor assessment report cannot be made public due to confidentiality restrictions in the proposals submitted in response to the RFP.

What are the anticipated financial impacts to PEO's budget after restricting Non-Bachelor of Engineering Graduates from applying for full licensure?
These factors and many others are evaluated carefully throughout the budget setting process. Following approval of each annual budget by Council, PEO's financial health is continually monitored throughout the year.

Would PEO consider reporting on the costs associated with holding meeting in person versus hybrid versus online? Given the fact that technology is available to allow for the holding of meetings virtually, members may expect that PEO move to holding much of it's work in the virtual realm to reduce costs related to traveling etc.
The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on professional meetings and has enabled greater opportunities for meeting with colleagues over virtual platforms. Like many organizations, PEO staff and Council continue to adapt to this new era of hybrid work, and we will continue to consider all meeting options available when planning committee, Council and other meetings.

Why did PEAK have so many issues and problems when we tried to use it?
PEO is responding to the lessons learned during the roll out period including both technical and substantive concerns in advance of next year's shift to make PEAK enforceable.

Will non-completion of PEAK requirements affect one's PEO benefits such as the Manulife Insurance program?
Insurance requirements are within the purview of the corresponding insurer provider.

What actions could the PEO take to reduce the disproportionate impact on new engineers, internationally trained immigrants, and academics?
In relation to licensing changes, PEO along with Council continues to study the impacts of the decisions that were made while addressing questions received from stakeholders to the regulatory and licencing committees to review potential solutions options.

Other than achieving the 30 by 30 target for women in engineering, what specific actions is the PEO doing to achieve provincial targets in all other equity-deserving groups, such as Indigenous, visible minorities, and LGBTQ2+ demographics?
As the regulator of the practice of professional engineering in Ontario, PEO is committed to helping to identify and remove barriers to the participation of women in the engineering profession. Through our Anti-Racism and Equity Code, PEO is prioritizing various historically marginalized communities in engineering, including not women, as well as Black, Indigenous, and other racialized populations. Moreover, we are developing specific strategies to counter any systemic discrimination impacting persons based on gender identity—including women, two-spirit, intersex, transgender, and gender-variant persons.

PEO is an active partner in the 30 by 30 joint initiative between Engineers Canada and every provincial and territorial engineering regulator in Canada. The goal is to dramatically increase the representation of newly licensed women engineers by the year 2030. PEO is currently partnering with University of Toronto, Rotman School of Management to undertake an independent gender audit of PEO's existing licensing process and internal operations. The audit will investigate potential gender biases and any unintentional barriers that may impede women from getting licensed. A report will be shared with the public addressing some of the above concerns which will help support ongoing changes in PEO's operations as they relate to any identified gaps.

Would there be an online visibility on every stage of application for PEO applicants in this new digital transformation?
The online application portal allows applicants to view each section of their application, including sections pertaining to identification, academics, experience, and good character. In addition, applicants will receive notifications and will be able to view the status of their currently submitted application. More information about PEO's licensing process is available on PEO's website. All inquiries should be directed to applicants@peo.on.ca.

For the CPD reporting requirement, the requirement is that the registered member should be practicing with PEO for at least 12 months. Is that correct?
Details pertaining to the PEAK program can be found on the PEO website at www.peopeak.ca. Licence holders are encouraged to send all questions and comments about PEAK to peak@peo.on.ca.

Can you please clarify/mention again about PEAK January exam?
All details about the PEAK program, including an explanation of the three PEAK program elements, are available on PEO's website at www.peopeak.ca.

Why do we include non-practicing or retired members in PEAK? How many members are dropping out of PEO, and what proportion of the membership does that represent?

Non-practicing and retired licence holders are only required to answer the first part of PEAK. For the latest PEAK compliance data, please see the CEO/registrar's report available here: CEO/Registrar Update | Professional Engineers Ontario (peo.on.ca). Information about PEO's register is available in PEO's annual reports which can be found on PEO's website: Annual Report | Professional Engineers Ontario (peo.on.ca)

With the EIT program removed, how would PEO ensure newly trained engineers obtain the required experience?

Under the new licence process that came into effect on May 15, 2023, all applicants must demonstrate both the academic and experience requirements before applying. All applicants must have a minimum of 48 months of acceptable engineering work experience, which must be demonstrated at the time of application through PEO's competency-based assessment (CBA).

How will you assess the experience of international applicants?

Under the new licence process that came into effect on May 15, 2023, all applicants must demonstrate both the academic and experience requirements before applying. All applicants must have a minimum of 48 months of acceptable engineering work experience, which must be demonstrated at the time of application through PEO's competency-based assessment (CBA).

A validator assesses and rates the applicant's work experience. A validator must have direct, first-hand knowledge of the applicant's work and must have provided suitable professional supervision of the applicant throughout the work period being validated and have taken technical responsibility for the applicant's work. The validator may have a title other than supervisor and may be a manager, mentor, client or colleague.

Validation assists in assuring to PEO that the licensing requirements set out in the Act and the regulations have been satisfied. Validation does not constitute a review of the applicant's work experience, in Canada or internationally—it simply confirms that it was acquired.

Will PEO be tracking and reporting on its performance, relative to stated targets, on responding/approving P.ENG. applications of all types.

Yes, reporting is an obligation under the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* (FARPACTA).

When removing the requirement for Canadian experience, have you considered how engineering is practiced in other countries?

PEO is one of many regulators in Ontario subject to the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions and Compulsory Trades Act* (FARPACTA), which is aimed at promoting fairness and transparency in the licensing process, particularly for those who are internationally educated and/or trained. Amendments to FARPACTA by the *Working for Workers Act, 2021* and the *Working for Workers Act, 2022*, compel affected regulators to make the necessary operational and policy changes in 2023.

PEO will continue to implement a multi-faceted, rigorous process for obtaining a professional engineering licence. Prospective applicants are still required to demonstrate academic requirements and 48 months of experience requirements at time of application so that PEO staff can more efficiently verify and process applications.

Applicants must demonstrate their experience meets requirements for engaging in the practice of professional engineering by completing a competency-based assessment. The CBA examines engineering competencies across several categories, including technical, communication, project management, and professional accountability.

What is PEO doing to improve the service it provides members? In particular response times to emails sent to the various inquiry email addresses (peak, applicants, etc.). As a member licensed in another Canadian province I have been repeatedly disappointed in the level of service that PEO provides its applicants and members.
In 2023, PEO introduced a customer service team to support first level resolution of common inquiries from licence holders, potential applicants and others. In 2023, the customer service team provided first point of contact resolution to over 90% of the 18,000 queries it received.

Will all training acquired to meet my company's hiring training accepted in PEAK?
The latest details about the PEAK program are available on the web page, https://peopeak.ca. For CPD activities to count, they must meet the criteria indicated on the web page.

Other jurisdictions do not require programs equivalent to PEAK for non-practicing members. Why would you not be able to state a non-practicing status, and eliminate it?
The latest details about the PEAK program are available on the web page, https://peopeak.ca, including which licence holders do not have to complete the CPD reporting element of the PEAK program.

Will PEO ensure that all new and incumbent Councillors attend and participate in training and onboarding to ensure all members of Council understand their duties and the rules of Council as a governing board of a regulator?
PEO delivers onboarding training for all new and returning Councillors. The training will take place in the week following the AGM and all Council members are invited and encouraged to participate.

Why is PEO very vague at explaining what qualifies as CPD hours?
A CPD activity is admissible for the PEAK program if the learning content helps the licence holder reduce their risk to the public arising from their acts of professional engineering. A CPD activity is acceptable if the learning activity addresses knowledge of the responsibilities of professional engineers, understanding of pertinent codes and standards, and knowledge of best practices in acts of professional engineering (all of which must be relevant to their practice areas).

The PEAK program accepts all learning formats since individuals learn in different ways, have unique personal circumstances and because PEAK focuses on what is learned rather how it is learned. This means that licence holders must complete CPD activities that are PEAK admissible, but they can participate in activities in their preferred learning formats. These include CPD activities that are free or paid, self-paced or instructor-led, delivered virtually or in person or in a hybrid format, as well as events that are held locally or overseas. For more information about the PEAK program and admissibility criteria, visit https://peopeak.ca.

Can you comment on how many voting members are online during the AGM today?
344 attendees and 248 of them are voting members.

Why are P.Eng. annual fees so high compared to the ones in USA?
Annual PEO P.Eng. licence fees, which have not increased since 2019, are generally among the lowest in Canada as compared to other provinces.

For PEAK, it is unclear how we show our proof of gaining the CPD hours. Is there any regulation regarding this?
PEO is developing audit procedures and requirements and will publish details once they become available.

Will PEO help chapters to educate members about the new CPD program?
Presently, the latest details about the PEAK program are available on the web page, https://peopeak.ca, including a recording of a PEAK informational webinar. Licence holders are encouraged to send all questions and comments about PEAK to peak@peo.on.ca.

Under FARPACTA legislation, why did PEO decide to restrict Non-B.Eng Canadian graduates from applying for full licensure? And how does the PEO justify this approach as "Fair Access" to a Regulated Trade?
We are aware that the changes to our licence application process have unfortunately excluded some prospective applicants from being able to qualify for a professional engineering licence. This is something that we are taking very seriously, and we are working quickly to respond to and resolve this issue as best we can. As soon as we have more information to share, we will be contacting these affected groups immediately.

How many staff does PEO employ?
124 full time staff and 11 contractors on the payroll as of Dec 31, 2022.

May one P.Eng. who is working and/or residing in various locations within Ontario be allowed to affiliate with multiple chapters?
P.Engs. and EITs are welcome to attend events at all Chapters across Ontario. However, membership is limited to a single Chapter as this is connected to voting permissions at the annual Chapter AGM.

Why don't Chapter volunteers receive a certificate of appreciation like those who volunteer for PEO committees?
Certificates of appreciation are available for all chapter volunteers. It is the Chapter board's responsibility to liaise with PEO's Chapter Office to request these certificates, including any specific wording they might wish to include.

Just curious, why don't PEO and OSPE be simplified into one organization?
Professional Engineers Ontario (PEO), the organization that regulates professional engineering in the province to serve and protect the public interest, and the Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE), the advocacy and services organization for professional engineers, are committed to working together to make a vital and respected profession even better. Working with the Canadian Society of Professional Engineers, PEO created OSPE in 2000 as a distinct organization dedicated to advancing the interests of professional engineers in Ontario, and PEO continues to support OSPE in this important role. Since 2000, OSPE has been the voice of professional engineers across the province, speaking out on their behalf to governments, industry and the public. Both PEO's and OSPE's roles are important: PEO, as a fair and effective regulator, and OSPE, as a strong voice for engineers. As two mature organizations, PEO and OSPE exist autonomously, working together when appropriate in a business-like manner.

Will applicants of PEO's legacy licensing application process (pre-May 15th, 2023) need to submit experience records in the old format or new CBA model?
As of May 15, 2023, only Competency-Based Assessments will be accepted.

Need more clarification on CPDs for Engineering faculty members.
The latest details about the PEAK program are available on the web page, https://peopeak.ca. For CPD activities to count, they must meet the criteria indicated on the web page. All learning formats are valid.

The PEAK email takes too long to respond (more than a month at times). What can be done to turnaround questions? Can we have a guaranteed turnaround time?
PEO is committed to supporting users through their PEAK program requirements. Earlier this year, PEO received thousands of calls and emails from users during a short period which resulted in protracted response times. At all times, the latest details about the PEAK program are available on the web page, https://peopeak.ca.

With increasing criticality of Information Technology and information security relates to safeguarding the privacy, health and safety of Canadians, does PEO actively engage with individuals in these industries to encourage licensure (when criteria are met of course)?
Unlicensed Practice is aware of the common use of "engineer" by unlicensed persons in the information technology field and elsewhere. We have diligently pursued compliance with those persons reported to us, and we have referred matters to our legal counsel on several occasions when immediate compliance was not forthcoming. However, at present, we are waiting for the outcome of a case brought by APEGA which is the first time that a prosecution has been maintained against someone using "engineer" in this context. We remind members that there is no complete prohibition in the Act against unlicensed people using "engineer" and Canadian courts have ruled in favour of defendants using similar titles in the past.

Will the PEO be proactive in supporting the ethics research necessary to mitigate risks of erosion of human rights and public safety by establishing ethical use of AI in engineering in Ontario?
PEO's legislated mandate only concerns regulating the practice of professional engineering. As such, PEO does not regulate any technology per se, but licensed professional engineers are required to responsibly use technology in their engineering practice.

While we do not specifically address the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in our practice guidelines or standards, our "Developing software for Safety Critical Engineering Application Applications" Guideline addresses ethical responsibilities: Developing Software for Safety Critical Engineering Applications Guideline (peo.on.ca), as highlighted below does address the use of safety critical software that impact the public interest:
 Page 5 – Introduction:
Safety critical software can have many applications, including but not limited to:
• control and data acquisition;
• sensing and interpretation software, and modeling and design software that is used to make or automate critical decisions and actions that impact the public interest, such as utility (telecommunications, water, electricity, gas, traffic) control and protection;
• public transportation control systems and industrial safety;
• protection and control systems software; and
• medical and diagnostic equipment. It is the responsibility of the sealing engineer using third[1]party software to validate results obtained from the software before implementing them into the system

Page 6 – 5. Professional Responsibility

5.1 Public Interest Developing safety critical software is a complex undertaking, comprising different processes, including specifying requirements, design, implementation, testing, verification and validation. Furthermore, interpreting the needs of clients and consumers, balancing budget, and schedule constraints, and ensuring the efficiency, effectiveness, integrity, security, privacy, safety, and quality of the software are all activities that involve a degree of risk. These facts should remind engineers of their responsibility for performing due diligence and protecting the public interest, since, ultimately, engineers contribute to the success of software projects.

Under section 72(2)(d) of Regulation 941, PEO licence holders are required to "make responsible provision for complying with applicable statutes, regulations, standards, codes, by-laws and rules in connection with work being undertaken by or under the responsibility of the practitioner". Should the federal or provincial government pass statutes, regulations, standards, codes, etc. regarding the use of AI, licence holders using AI in the course of their engineering practice would be required to full comply with them.